

Into the 21st Century: your thoughts

In June this year, members were invited to respond to the Renewal Working Group's paper *Into the 21st Century: The future for ALIA*. The paper covered the scope and direction of the Association; the proposed objects of the Association; the role and composition of the Board of Directors; the role and composition of the National Advisory Council; and institutional membership. Responses were received from branches, regional groups, sections, other information sector organisations and both personal and institutional members. The Renewal Working Group considered these responses at its August meeting.

The proposed National Advisory Council attracted most comment. Many divisions advocated that such a body represent all ALIA divisions. A number of responses sought clarification of the Council's role. In response to these concerns, the Renewal Working Group developed the concept of an Annual Policy Congress. One delegate from each branch, regional group, section (national) and special interest group would be nominated to attend the Congress and would have voting rights. Each division would fund their representative's attendance at Congress, with provision for application for supplementation out of Association funds to equalise regional differ-

ences. Other members of the Association would be able to attend, but not to vote. Likewise, representatives from other related Associations and industry groups may attend, but without voting rights.

The program of the Congress is defined as 'including discussion of policy and issues of relevance to the sector as a whole; and policy, issues and operational matters of relevance to the Association' with Congress able to make recommendations to the Board of Directors. There is provision for smaller working groups to be formed out of the membership of the Congress.

The proposed composition of the Board of Directors and wording of the Objects created interest, with both issues to be resolved when the Constitution is endorsed at the October meeting of General Council. Comments about the Board of Directors focused upon who elects directors, and the position of vice-president. Two models for the election of the Board of Directors and the Board's composition will be considered by General Council.

A number of responses sought the retention of 'library' within the proposed Objects. Generally, respondents commended the expression of a widened scope for the Association through these Objects. A range of

amendments to the proposed Objects is before Council.

Two areas not specifically canvassed in the paper drew a significant number of comments. ALIA's structure was regularly mentioned. Comments focused on the importance of an Association with an efficient structure, responsive to all members' needs. The Divisional Structure Subcommittee of the Renewal Working Group, comprising Helen Mandl, Deanne Barrett, Di Booker and Jim Graham, is one aspect of this. It is developing a range of divisional structural models for General Council's consideration and consultation with the membership.

A range of responses emphasised that ALIA must continue to provide appropriate recognition to members with relevant professional qualifications and knowledge. The Board of Education is preparing options for Council on membership categories and criteria. The CPD compliance category will be implemented in 2000. Any other changes to membership structure will be implemented in 2001, following appropriate consultation with members.

Members of the RWG thank all those who provided such carefully-considered responses to the consultation paper. ■



"Go on, ask me anything!"

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